(c) if so, Government's view thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M. V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Special Category State status is approved by the National Development Council to States which are pre-dominantly of hilly terrain with large tribal population, located on sensitive international border areas with underdeveloped socio-economic infrastructure, low revenue base, non-viable finances and overall economic backwardness. Since Bihar does not fulfil all these criteria, according Special Category State status to Bihar is not being considered.

Upgradation and Maintenance of National Highways

3579. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of National Highways are in need of extensive repair;

(b) if so, the details thereof, highway-wise;

(c) whether Government propose to adopt new technology in order to upgrade and maintain some National Highways;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the new technology is economical; and

(f) if so, the savings to be affected in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K. H. MUNIAPPA): (a) and (b) Maintenance and repair of National Highways is a continuous process and the National Highways are maintained in traffic worthly condition within the available resources.

(c) to (f) The Government encourages promotion of proven new technologies for development and maintenance of National Highways subject to their economic viability. In this regard, identification, the development of new technologies and their adoption in Indian condition is a continuous process. Adoption of such new technologies is aimed at reduction in the life cycle cost.